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On behalf of the twenty members of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, I thank the Food and Nutrition Service for including me on this impressive panel of experts in the science of nutrition.

I bring you greetings and best wishes from my boss at the Department of Health and Human Services, Secretary Tommy Thompson, and my other boss, the President of the United States. Both of these leaders have made prevention a cornerstone of their program to improve the health of Americans through the President's initiative, Healthier U.S.

By the way, Secretary Thompson doesn't just talk about prevention. He's lost 15 pounds and adopted a regular fitness program. And you all know about President Bush, the nation's premiere role model for fitness. He runs and works out in the gym to reduce stress and stay healthy.

Mrs. Bush is someone like most of us. She's not a runner or an athlete. She makes time in her day to walk or ride her exercise bicycle to gain the health benefits of physical activity.

Secretary Thompson is leading the task force for HealthierU.S. The task force has answered the President's mandate to study and report how all federal agencies can work together to build a healthier nation.

I am delighted to have the opportunity to talk to this audience about how we can work together.

As a physical therapist and a clinical social worker, I think of my profession as a marriage of mind and body.

And that's what I'm going to propose to you today: a marriage. Just as you cannot separate the body from the mind, you cannot divorce nutrition from physical activity when you're talking about health. They are a couple.

The marriage I propose is a union of the utmost necessity in the troubling world we face today.

Our nation is fighting a war on two fronts: a war against terrorism and tyranny, and another war—a war against the chronic diseases that are killing your friends and mine, your neighbors and mine, your family and mine.

Although this second war is a silent one, it is a major threat to our well being as a nation. It's as deadly as anthrax; as lethal as smallpox; and as dangerous as a dirty bomb.

That fight is costing America much more than the \$217 billion a year for costs related to obesity and type 2 diabetes alone. What if we had that \$217 billion available for other things our nation needs?

We all know the GRIM mortality and morbidity statistics.

We know that almost 1,000 Americans die every day because they chose a sedentary lifestyle and a poor diet. Think of the loss of productivity, the pain and suffering caused by obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease!

We know that sound nutrition combined with daily physical activity lowers the risk of developing many chronic diseases that kill Americans and cost us billions of dollars a year.

But the government can't buy us a healthier nation. It's not a law that Congress can pass. Building a healthy nation requires a change in the lifestyle and culture of each individual citizen, of our families.

As President Bush says, "Better health is an individual responsibility and an important national goal."

The President wants each one of us to:

- Be physically active every day, adults for 30 minutes; children 60 minutes.
- Eat a nutritious diet
- Get preventive screenings, and
- Avoid risky behaviors.

So back to my proposal of marriage. We must couple sound nutrition and daily physical activity in every presentation, publication, and communication.

Here is my proposal: as you revise the food pyramid, please put these words on the base of the pyramid, as the foundation: "Be physically active every day."

And as we revise our exercise and physical activity pyramid, we will place these word's on the foundation: "Eat a nutritious diet."

We will work with you to communicate both messages, together. Remember: we're a couple!

Today I want to share with you something that I hope will help you in your personal and professional lives.

As the twenty Council members and I travel around the country to spread the President's vision of a healthier U.S, we want to do more than offer Americans a mandate to be active.

We are offering a tool to get Americans moving *today*.

On behalf of the President and his Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, I call on all of you here today to take the President's Challenge.

Some of you may remember taking a fitness test while you were in school or heard your child talking about it.

Did you earn a patch? —[hold up round Presidential patch.]

Today the President's Challenge is much more than a test for children.

The new President's Challenge is a tool to help all Americans become active now and stay active for a lifetime.

Now, for the first time since the Council began in 1956, adult Americans can join kids and participate in the President's Challenge awards.

Today, I challenge everyone here to start moving for 30 minutes a day, five days a week, for six weeks.

Keep track of what you do on this log.

In only six weeks, you can earn this —a Presidential Adult Active Lifestyle Award.

All you have to do is to move your body five days a week for thirty minutes a day—for at least six weeks.

Every activity counts—walking, climbing the stairs, raking leaves, mopping the floor, running, biking, playing sports, using a pedometer.

And you don't have to do it at one time—you can accumulate 30 minutes a day in small increments.

Challenge the employees in your office to join you.

Challenge your family to join you. There is an award for children and teens.

Today, many Americans obtain information, especially health information, from the web.

We have health and fitness experts working with web developers to create an interactive web site for the President's Challenge program.

Soon, Americans of all ages and abilities can keep track of their activities online as they earn Presidential awards.

This exciting fitness tool will be interactive and free of charge. We will be launching it in the near future.

When the time comes, we'll welcome your support in promoting the President's Challenge interactive web site as an effective motivational tool for your constituents.

Our programs will continue to be offered in paper form for those who don't use the web.

I've brought enough logs to give one to each of you. So pick up this log today and start moving.

This motivational tool is an action—a way to begin.

One of our recommendations for the HealthierU.S. report is to combine the Presidential Active Lifestyle Awards with the CDC's "Five a Day" program. This is way to say, "We're making this marriage work."

I ask all of you to spread the word that there is a tool to help Americans begin. The small steps we take together will bring big rewards.

Together, step-by-step, day-by-day, one person at a time, we can build a healthier U.S.

Thank you.

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